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*Zur Geschichte der Vers libres in der neu-französischen Poesie* von PH. AUG. BECKER. Halle, 1888. 8vo, pp. 37.

In this doctor's dissertation, offered at Strasbourg and published also in the *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie* (vol. xii, pp. 89-125), the author examines the origin and development of free verse in modern French poetry. Free verse he defines: a non-strophic metrical structure, consisting of lines of unequal length, arranged at will, and having a free disposition of rimes.

The history of free verse begins in the Greek chorus, continues in the church sequences, and is traced in the *pastourelles* and *motets* of mediæval French literature. The Pre-renaissance poetry of France contains also certain elements of free verse, which however disappeared before the rise of classical imitation. Its modern form BECKER determines to be an importation from Italy and to have arrived full-fledged on French soil in a madrigal and a *pasquin* (before 1525?) of MELLIN DE SAINT-GELAIS. This first French madrigal was followed considerably later by others of RONSARD and BAIF. The latter wrote also dithyrambs after the Greek. These imitations however were sporadic and remained without abiding influence.

The pastorals of the seventeenth century reintroduced, from their Italian models, the madrigal into France. The vogue of the 'Astrée' and of its imitations, the Florentine complexion of the royal court, the Roman polish of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, all combined to make the madrigal the poetical verse of society, as was instanced by the 'Guirlande de Julie' (1641). Under its influence the form of the epigram was gradually changed in the direction of free verse, as is seen in the works of GOMBAULD and BRÉBEUF, until the two kinds were hardly distinguished save by their subject.

The introduction of free verse into other forms of poetry than the madrigal and epigram is due to VOITURE. His example was followed by the poets of the *Précieuse* school, but was restricted for a time to epistles, *étrennes*, and the like. With the sixth decade of the century the use of this style became general in eclogs, elegies and idylls, and reached lasting celebri-

ty in the 'Contes' and 'Fables' of LA FONTAINE. The letters and tales of the age show also in their mingled prose and poetry the popularity of the *vers libres*, and free strophes were evolved from them as legitimate descendants.

An important part of the dissertation is devoted to the history of free verse on the stage, united to musical compositions of Italian origin, as the ballet and the musical drama. In this phase it attained its highest development in the scenic plays of CORNEILLE and MOLIÈRE, and the librettos of QUINAULT.

In the eighteenth century VOLTAIRE and the librettists continued the tradition of free verse. The Romantic school, however, drove it from artistic works, and its last traces are found in ALFRED DE MUSSET, a conscious imitation of LA FONTAINE. Free verse, as a form of poetry, passed away with the society which fostered it.

A review of DR. BECKER'S work can be little else than a summary, so complete is his treatment. He would have added attractiveness to his subject by a more systematic exposition, coupled with clearness of phrase.

F. M. WARREN.

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#### THE MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION OF OHIO.

In vol. iii (p. 263) of this Journal, attention was called to the formation of a Modern Language Association in connection with the Teachers' Association of North Carolina. The gratifying news comes to us of the establishment also in Ohio of a second organisation similar to that of the Old North State, and we hope that the time may not be far distant when associations of like import may be formed in many states of the Union; they would naturally serve an important end in arousing sympathy and developing higher ideals for modern language work, by the discussion of questions of a local character and of detail that cannot come before the general organisation. As a valuable auxiliary, therefore, in the promotion of the best interests of modern linguistic culture, we would give the new organisation a hearty welcome and augur for it a successful career of missionary labor. Below will be found a

copy of circular containing information as to purpose, membership, etc., of the Ohio Association, and also the Constitution adopted by that body:

At the last meeting of the Association of Ohio Colleges, Dec. 27, 1889, a number of Professors of Modern Languages met at Columbus, to form an organization for the purpose of improving the methods, and raising the standard of instruction in Modern Languages (English, French, German, etc.) in the schools and colleges of Ohio. A permanent organization was effected, a constitution adopted, and officers elected. The name of the Association is THE MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION OF OHIO. JAMES MORGAN HART, President, University of Cincinnati; HUGO SCHILLING, Vice-President, Wittenberg College; ERNST A. EGGERS, Secretary and Treasurer, Ohio State University. The Association is to meet every year, on the occasion of the meeting of the Association of Ohio Colleges, or at such other place as the Executive Committee may designate. You are cordially invited to join this organization. Will you be so kind as to communicate the contents of this circular to any one interested in the study of Modern Languages? Applications for membership, or other communications, should be addressed to ERNST A. EGGERS, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.

CONSTITUTION.—I. The Name of this Association shall be THE MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION OF OHIO.—II. Any one engaged in the teaching of Modern Languages in the State of Ohio may become a member of the Association, subject to the approval of the Executive Committee.—III. The object of the Association shall be to improve the methods, and raise the standard of instruction in Modern Languages in the schools and colleges of Ohio.—IV. The officers of the Association shall be a President, Vice-President, and Secretary, who shall also act as Treasurer. These officers shall constitute the Executive Committee, and shall be elected annually by the Association.—V. The Executive Committee shall have charge of the general interests of the Association, such as the election of members, calling of meetings, selection of papers to be read, and regulation of proceedings.—VI. This Constitution may be amended at any annual meeting by a two-thirds vote of the members present. The annual dues are fixed at \$1.00.

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

#### NOTES ON RHETORIC.

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES:

SIRS:—Allow me to say a few words in

reply to PROF. J. M. HART, who in the January number of MOD. LANG. NOTES discusses some of my "Notes on Rhetoric."

First of all I wish to express my regret that I did not remember, until it was too late to remedy my error, that PROF. JOHN S. HART was "no longer able to defend himself." The sentence, however, that I took from his Rhetoric did not in my opinion need any defence. I can point out the same construction in THACKERAY, DE QUINCEY, BURKE, and a multitude of other writers: it does not seem to me a solecism.

But the reasons that PROF. J. M. HART says his father assigned for condemning the locutions "and which" and "and who," and approving the locution "but which," I cannot wholly accept. These reasons are:—

I. "John S. Hart was opposed to all such locutions as 'and who,' 'and which,' etc. He held that they were pleonastic. In merely appositional and cumulative clauses, 'and' is superfluous; thus, 'I once knew a boy of good parts, faithful, attentive, *and* who carried off all the prizes.' Why the 'and'? It adds nothing to the expression."

Now I agree with PROF. HART that where the *who* or *which* clause merely *defines*, the "and" is superfluous; but, in the sentence from PROF. HILL's 'Rhetoric' which I criticised, the "and who" clause *adds* some information about the "party"; and the "and" is necessary to avoid ambiguity: "The approach of the party, *sent* for the purpose of compelling the country people to bury their dead, *and who* had already assembled several peasants, obliged Edward, etc." Let me illustrate my meaning by the following examples:—

1. "A boy of fine education, *who* has been well trained in ancient and modern learning, is not likely to fail." Here "and" before "who" would be incorrect, because the "who" clause merely explains "of fine education."

2. "I gave him a piece of bread, light in weight but very black, *which* he ate." Here again "and" before the relative would be incorrect, because "the relative serves not so much to periphrase an attribute as to connect a fact": *which*=*and it* (cf. MAETZNER, vol. iii,